

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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NEW YORK PASS TO R. NICHOLS, ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

DEPT PASS TO H. AVERCH, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, UN, ECOSOC

SUBJECT: UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR

DEVELOPMENT: 2ND PREPCOM

1. SUMMARY. SECOND PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF UN CONFERENCE ON S AND T FOR DEVELOPMENT (UNCSTD) OPENED TWO-WEEK MEETING, (JAN. 23-FEB 3) WITH PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF SELECTION OF FIVE MAJOR SUBJECT AREAS FOR CONFERENCE. PREPCOM WILL ALSO REVIEW PROGRESS IN PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS, PARTICULARLY PREPARATION OF NATIONAL PAPERS IN WHICH ALL COUNTRIES WILL EXAMINE RELATION OF S AND T TO SOCIO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AT FIRST PLENARY, PREPCOM ADOPTED AGENDA, RECONFIRMED PREPCOM BUREAU AND LISTENED TO LENGTHY REPETITIOUS STATEMENT OF SYG DA COSTA (BRASIL). END SUMMARY.

2. PREPCOM LEADERSHIP. SINCE 32ND UNGA DECIDED EXTEND PREPCOM MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE ALL MEMBERS OF UN,
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SECRETARIAT OF CONFERENCE HAD IMPLIED THAT NEW ELECTIONS MAY BECOME NECESSARY TO REFLECT NEW LARGER MEMBERSHIP. IT WAS SPECULATED THAT SYG DA COSTA WANTED NEW ELECTIONS BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS WITH CURRENT CHAIRMAN RAMACHANDRAN (INDIA). WEO'S CONSENSUS, REFLECTING US VIEW, WAS TO SUPPORT PRESENT 5-PERSON BUREAU WHICH HAS SO FAR DONE REASONABLY GOOD JOB, ALSO TO AVOID INEVITABLE

CONTROVERSY RESULTING FROM NEW ELECTIONS OR FROM EXPANSION OF BUREAU. FORTUNATELY THESE APPREHENSIONS PROVED UNFOUNDED. AT THE OPENING OF THE FIRST PLENARY MEETING THE DELEGATE FROM ZAIRE, SPEAKING FOR G-77, ANNOUNCED THAT GROUP HAD DECIDED THAT PRESENT BUREAU DESERVES CONFIDENCE OF PREPCOM AND SHOULD BE MAINTAINED. PLENARY IMMEDIATELY CONFIRMED BUREAU IN OFFICE AND PROCEEDED TO ADOPT AGENDA OF MEETING.

3. SYG STATEMENT. DA COSTA'S ONE-HOUR STATEMENT REVIEWED ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF CONFERENCE'S SECRETARIAT DURING LAST YEAR, INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT OF 140 NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS TO COORDINATE COUNTRIES' PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE; SIXTY REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE FOR PREPARATION OF NATIONAL PAPERS WERE MET BY SECRETARIAT; ORGANIZATION OF SIXTY SEMINARS RELATED TO PREPARATIONS FOR CONFERENCE; FIVE REGIONAL MEETINGS HAVE MADE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SELECTION OF FIVE SUBJECT AREAS AND MADE OTHER CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE.

4. IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM SYG DEFENSIVELY AND REPETITIOUSLY STATED CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES WERE CLEARLY DEFINED IN UN RESOLUTIONS STRESSING NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER (NIEO). CONFERENCE NEEDS TO CORRECT INEQUALITIES AMONG NATIONS, REDRESS CERTAIN DISADVANTAGES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND REDUCE GAP BETWEEN DEVELOPED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SYG COVERED OLD GROUND IN STATING S AND T CANNOT BE DEALT WITH INDEPENDENTLY RATHER AS COMPONENTS OF OVERALL CHANGES AND NEW APPROACHES AT INTERNATIONAL AS WELL AS NATIONAL LEVELS. ALSO IMPORTANT ARE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL SITUATIONS, AS WELL AS ITS PREOCCUPATIONS WITH MAINTAINING QUALITY OF LIFE. HE SAID DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WANT TO ASSIMILATE S AND T IN THEIR NATIONAL CULTURE; NOT BE ASSIMILATED BY S AND T THAT CREATES MORE NEEDS THAN CAN BE SATISFIED.

5. SYG SAID PREPARATION OF NATIONAL PAPERS SHOULD PRODUCE SPECIFIC PLANS OF ACTIONS AND STIMULATE A REALISTIC DEBATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND CLARIFY EACH COUNTRY'S OWN OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT. SYG REJECTED READY-MADE FORMULAE AND CERTAIN MYTHS WHICH TEND TO CAUSE POLARIZED AND POLITICIZED POSITIONS, E.G.: ASSUMPTION OF "SINGLE MODEL" FOR DEVELOPMENT, AND "A PRIORI", PATERNALISTIC ATTITUDES, IMPLIED IN CONCEPT OF "INTERMEDIATE TECHNOLOGY" OR "APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY". DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SHOULD HAVE CAPABILITY TO USE FULL RANGE OF AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGIES, FROM MOST ELEMENTARY TO

MOST SOPHISTICATED, SINCE IN SOME CASES BASIC NEEDS CAN ONLY BE SATISFIED BY SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY. SYG CAUTIONED AGAINST SOLUTIONS BASED ON PURELY INSTITUTIONAL FORMULAE.

6. REACTION TO SYG STATEMENT. WEOG'S GENERALLY CRITICAL

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IN PRIVATE BECAUSE ITS TONE OBVIOUSLY BIASED IN FAVOR OF LDC'S WITH STRESS ON NIEO, ALTHOUGH IT RECOGNIZED DA COSTA HAS TO USE RHETORIC OF HIS CONSTITUENCY. US WILL WORK TO PLACE DISCUSSION ON SPECIFIC AND IN CONCRETE TERMS, REITERATING US INTENTION OF MAKING POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO CONFERENCE AND CONGRATULATING AND SUPPORTING SYG IN HIS CALL FOR SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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